

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9226

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 2262

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB

SUBJECT: THIRTY-SIXTH DAY OF KC DRY SEASON OFFENSIVE

REF: PHNOM PENH 2186

1. SUMMARY: A MEKONG RIVER CONVOY TO PHNOM PENH, THE FOURTH SINCE THE KC OFFENSIVE BEGAN, CROSSED THE BORDER INTO CAMBODIA FROM SOUTH VIETNAM FEBRUARY 5. THE CONVOY WAS COMPOSED OF TWO AMMUNITION BARGES; AT LATEST REPORT ONE HAS RETURNED TO SOUTH VIETNAM AND THSAOTHER IS BEING PUSHED BACK TO THE BORDER. ACCORDING TO GKR FIGURES, THE KC FIRED OVER 500 ROCKETS AT PHNOM PENH, POCHENTONG AIRFIELD AND ENVIRONS DURING JANUARY. FANK TROOPS LINKED UP WITH A GARRISON ON ROUTE 4 THAT HAS BEEN BE-SIEGED SINCE AUGUST, 1974. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONVOY, COMPOSED OF TWO AMMUNITION BARGES AND FOUR TUGS, ASSISTED BY KHMER NAVY ESCORT CRAFT, CROSSED INTO CAMBODIA ABOUT NOON FEBRUARY 5. THREE OF THE FOUR TUGS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY SUNK OR ABANDONED. THE FOURTH TUG MANAGED TO PULL ONE AMMUNITION BARGE BACK ACROSS THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE BORDER. KHMER NAVY VESSELS ARE CURRENTLY PUSHING THE SECOND BARGE BACK TO THE BORDER
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HOPING TO SALVAGE IT AS WELL.

3. ON FEBRUARY 4, FRIENDLY FORCES FROM THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF KOMPONG SPEU, 40 KILOMETERS WEST OF PHNOM PENH ON ROUTE 4, LINKED UP WITH TROOPS FROM THE GARRISON OF DAS KANCHOR WHICH HAS BEEN ENCIRCLED SINCE LATE AUGUST. THIS OPERATION IS NOT ONLY A BOOST FOR THE MORALE OF THE TROOPS CONCERNED, BUT SERVES TO COMPLICATE KC SUPPLY OPERATIONS IN THE AREA.

4. THE KC FIRED ABOUT FOURTEEN 107MM ROCKETS AT PHNOM PENH AND POCHENTONG THUS FAR FEBRUARY 5, CAUSING LITTLE REPORTED DAMAGE OR CASUALTIES. THE ROCKETS FIRED AT POCHENTONG LANDED OUTSIDE THE PERIMETER. SEVERAL ROUNDS IN THE CITY LANDED NEAR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE ROYAL PALACE. FANK FIGURES FOR TOTAL ENEMY ROCKETS JANUARY 1-31 ARE AS FOLLOWS: FOUR-HUNDRED-FORTY-ONE 107MM ROCKETS WERE FIRED AT POCHENTONG, PHNOM PENH AND OTHER NEARBY TARGETS. TWO-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT OF THESE WERE DIRECTED AT POCHENTONG, 172 AT THE CAPITAL. THERE ARE 92 OTHER UNIDENTIFIED ROUNDS WHICH ARE BELIEVED TO BE ROCKETS. WE BELIEVE THESE FIGURES TO BE GENERALLY ACCURATE.
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